

FIVE

SCARCE TRACTS,

(Belonging to the *Popish Controversy*.)

VIZ.

The PLAIN MAN's Reply to the
CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES.

A Defence of the PLAIN MAN's
Reply to the CATHOLIC MIS-
SIONARIES.

The COUNTRY-PARSON's Admoni-
tion to his PARISHIONERS.

A Defence of the COUNTRY-PARSON's
Admonition to his PARISHIONERS.

The CHILD's Monitor against Popery.

WRITTEN BY

WILLIAM ASSHETON, D. D.

Now published in a Size conformable to other Papers relating
to that Debate, for the Convenience of those who are desirous
of compleating their Collections by the addition of these Tracts.

L O N D O N,

Reprinted for J. and J. RIVINGTON, in St. Paul's Church-Yard, and
S. PARKER, Bookseller, in Oxford. MDCCLI.

A. X. III. Jar.

THE
PLAIN
REPLY
TO THE
CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES

It is agreed by all Catholics, that the Church is infallible in its doctrine and guide. And Protestants admit, that if this could be made evidently appear, they would hold it as no controversy at all. This therefore is to be made evident unto Protestants. This is the task of Catholics, especially of Catholic Missionaries.

Croft's Appendix, to Exonol. Cap. iv. § 6.

L O N D O N

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T H E

Plain Man's R E P L Y

T O T H E

CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES.

Reverend Fathers,

I Have of late been very often admonished; *To leave the Church of England, and embrace the communion of the Church of Rome.* When I have first made my acknowledgment for the kindness of your frequent visits; I do then presume, with an honest plainness, thus to declare myself.

Your design is to persuade me to change my religion. Now *we countrymen*, you know, *do love a saving bargain.* If therefore I should be a *Roman Catholic*, what shall I be the better for't? What real benefit and advantage shall I get by such a change?

And here pray do not mistake me.

It is not any temporal advantage that I expect, by the profession either of yours, or any other religion. If my religion is my interest, I do then bless God for it; and have cause to be

A

truly

truly thankful, that he gives me such an easy and comfortable passage through this vale of tears. But if the free public exercise of my religion is not consistent with my worldly interest, but doth expose me to sufferings and troubles; I must then remember that I am a christian. And as such must chearfully take up my cross, and follow my blessed Saviour: *the captain of our salvation, who was made perfect through sufferings. Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously,* 1 Pet. 2. 23.

So that in short. When I do ask you; *What real benefit and advantage I shall get by being a Roman Catholic?* My meaning is plainly this. That since *the end of our faith, is the salvation of our souls*: Shall I find better and more certain directions in the Church of *Rome*, how to save my soul, than the Church of *England* can pretend to give me?

Particular; ;

Can the Church of *Rome* more distinctly explain the articles of the *creed*, and will she give me a better interpretation of the holy scriptures, out of which the creed is taken? Will she better direct me how to subdue my vicious Inclinations? How to procure pardon of my sins; and obtain the favour of God? If so, if these things can be solidly proved; it is then both my interest and duty to leave the Church of *England*, and embrace the communion of the Church of *Rome*.

Now in order to my satisfaction, I must needs grant you have often told me, *That the Church of Rome is infallible*; and that neither the *Church of England*, nor any other Protestant Church can pretend to be so. And then you have with great triumph demanded, Whether is not most prudent, to submit myself to an infallible guidance?

To

To which I do thus humbly reply.

You say, *fathers*, that the *Church of Rome* is infallible. But pray how do you prove it? And let me so far beg your favour, as not to think me impertinent, whilst I put this task upon you. For though you may perhaps blame it as too much confidence in a *catholic* of yours to ask questions upon this point, and may require an entire submission, rather than allow him to put in a *why* or *wherefore*, or trust his senses, or consult his reason beyond your allowance; yet *we*, call us what you please for it, cannot forego that *right* we have as *men* to examine a doctrine before we receive it for a divine truth. We naturally take this course in all weighty matters. And since I resolve (and I believe you'll say 'tis but reason I should) not to buy or swap a horse unless I *see* and *try* him. I pray, why should I forego my religion, or take up *yours upon trust*?

Pardon me, *Sirs*, I am more tender of my soul than to be so imposed on. I do therefore again very bluntly demand, How do you prove, that *the Church of Rome is infallible*?

And for your encouragement, permit me further to tell you; That it is *your* interest, as well as mine, to prove it at this time. For you have a great work lies upon you; even *the conversion of three kingdoms*. And though *the labourers are not few*, yet *the harvest is great*. It will therefore be your prudence, to fix upon this short and compendious method.

The particular points in controversy betwixt us, you know, are many. And it would take up a long time distinctly to debate them. But if you can convince me, that *your Church is infallible*; you will then make short work on't and prove them all at once.

For if your Church *cannot* err, it must then be acknowleg'd that she *hath not* erred. And consequently, whatever she hath

proposed as an *article of faith*, it ought to be received as such. So that prove this, and *all's your own*.

Now in order to my conviction, let us distinctly examine what this *infallibility* doth signify. Which I hope doth not work by way of *charm*; but if there is such a priviledge in your church, doubtless it admits of a rational explication.

And though I find it very difficult to understand your discourses about this matter (which are so various and uncertain, expressed with such diffidence and caution, that I can scarce think you believe it yourselves) yet if there is any sense in this proposition, *The Church of Rome is infallible*, it must then denote one of these *two* things:

1. The *indefectibility* and *duration*, or
2. The *infallible direction* of that Church.

If only the former; then the *infallibility* of the *Church of Rome* doth signify no more than this, *viz.*

It is a certain infallible truth; that the *Church of Rome* shall never be extinct, shall never cease to be a Church. Christ hath *built her upon the rock*; and the *gates of hell* shall not prevail against her.

To which interpretation of your infallibility I make bold to reply these *two* things.

1. *It is not true.*
2. *It is not sufficient.*

As to the *first*; There are indeed many comfortable promises; that the Church *catholic* shall never be extinct. Christ hath promised to be *always with her to the end of the world*. And the *gates of hell* (or of death) shall not prevail against her. i. e.

Maugre

Maugre all the malice of men and devils, the Church of Christ shall never wholly be destroyed. True religion shall never be so far driven out of the world, but that it shall always have, some where or other, some that believe and profess it in all things necessary to salvation.

But pray, *fathers*, What's this to the *Church of Rome*.

For though it is the noted mistake of your *writers*, to call the *Church of Rome* the Church *catholic* (and then to apply all the promises of protection and preservation to her as such) yet this is only their own confident supposal, without the least manner of proof.

Indeed the *Church of Rome* so far as she is orthodox and holds the *Catholic faith*, so far she may be truly called a catholic Church. But so likewise may the *Church of England*, the Church of *Denmark*, or any other particular Church. But now to assert; that the *Church of Rome* (though she were as catholic in her doctrine as she can pretend) is the catholic Church, exclusive of all others (besides the uncharitableness of the opinion) is as great an impropriety of speech as to affirm; *that a part is the whole*. Or, that one *single* member, suppose a *hand* or a *foot*, is the whole body.

Now that the *Church of Rome* is but a *particular* Church (a branch and member of the Church *catholic*, and as such may cease and be extinct, as any other particular Church may) is plainly determined by St. Paul. Rom. 11. 18, 20, 21. *Boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee—Be not high-minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.*

In short. The Church of Rome hath no special promise or privilege, above other particular Churches, of immunity from falling; either from the purity of faith, or the whole faith itself.

B

If

If there is such a privilege or promise, let it then be produced, and I shall with the greatest submission beg pardon for this mistake.

But suppose this exposition of your *infallibility* were *true*, yet

2. It is not *sufficient*; as not answering those ends, for which this privilege in your Church is pretended.

For let it be granted; that the *Church of Rome* is not only a true Church at present, but also shall still so continue to the end of the world. What then?

Will you thence infer, that the members of the *Church of England* are obliged to separate from their own Church, and embrace the communion of the *Church of Rome*?

As mean as my education hath been, I hope you do not fancy, that I am thus to be imposed on.

For even *my* slender capacity can easily apprehend, that to prove the necessity of such a *separation*, you must not only tell me, that the *Church of Rome* is a *Church* (for so likewise is the *Church of England*) but you ought further to consider the merits of the cause itself, by examining, the pretended *defects* of the *Church of England* on one hand; and the pretended *Privileges* of the *Church of Rome* on the other. Of which I shall add nothing further at present. But shall only desire you to observe; that *a true Church may be a corrupt Church*. As a man may be *truly* a man, and yet may be very dangerously sick.

But will you thence affirm, because such a poor patient still retains the *essence* and *being* of a man, that it is therefore my duty to change condition with him? If you and I were in two boats, and yours let the water in to the hazard of your life, can you think it fit that I should run out of my own into yours, because you could assure me it was a *true boat* or *truly* a boat still?

The

The application is easy; and pray, *fathers*, make it to yourselves.

I hope you are now fully convinced, that this *first* notion of *infallibility* will do you little service. Let us therefore proceed to examine the

Second, viz. The infallible direction of the Church of Rome. Which your writers do commonly thus explain.

That since the wisdom of God, for the direction of his Church in faith and worship, hath revealed his will in scripture and tradition; and since both scripture and tradition are liable to be misunderstood, and the sense of them mistaken: to secure christians from error, there is a living infallible judge, constituted and appointed by Jesus Christ, to determine all controversies in matters of faith; and to explain all difficult places of scripture. And that those, and those only, who submit themselves to this infallible judge, are the true members of the catholic Church: But that all others, whether Protestants, Hugonots, or however else denominated, who reject this judge, are heretics and schismatics.

This is the substance of what your authors say on this occasion. Particularly a late treatise, called *seek and you shall find*: printed by *H. Hills*, *permissu superiorum*, doth declare, pag. 6.

*" It is manifest this bare writing (the scripture) without some
 " living judge to interpret it, can never end controversies, nor se-
 " curely testify to us what we must adhere to in case of difficulties
 " arising from the meaning of the words. It remains then neces-
 " sary there should be some supreme judge or court of judicature,
 " amongst them who have embraced that religion; to the sentence
 " of which every one must be obliged to submit, and consequently
 " it must be secured from error in it."*

It seems then, *fathers*, an infallible judge is necessary upon these two accounts. 1, To interpret the scripture. 2, To end controversies.

That I may therefore neither *wrest the scriptures to my own destruction*; nor make a *schism* in the Church, by holding any doctrine contrary to the catholic faith; pray, *fathers*, resolve me; *who is this infallible judge*; that so upon occasion I may consult him? *Who is this unerring guide*; that so I may submit my self to his conduct? Pray give me a distinct and particular answer to this important question. And do not any longer trifle with me in so weighty a concern. Do not think to satisfy my scruples by affirming; that it is sufficient, for such an ignorant man as I am, to know; *that the Church is infallible*; and that all further inquiries are wholly needless in so plain a matter.

I say this is not sufficient, unless you can particularly resolve me; who it is that hath the management of this privilege in your Church.

Tell me therefore distinctly; *who is this infallible guide*? Where may I find him? And that my proposal is pertinent and proper, I do thus convince you.

Suppose I am travelling to a certain town: and do ask the next man I meet, which is the right way? who tells me it's a very cross road to find, and I may easily miss it. But, saith he, though I cannot direct you my self, yet there is a man lives in that *village*, who knows every step so exactly; that if you take him for your *guide*, you cannot possibly be mistaken.

Pray, friend, say I, at what house doth this honest man live? What is his name? How may I come to the speech of him? What manner of man is he, should I happen to meet him? Nay! saith he, I know nothing of all that, but you must find him as you can.

Now suppose every man in the village gives me the same wise answer, what an admirable direction would this prove?

This

This is our very case.

We are all strangers and pilgrims in this world: travelling towards that happy place; the *heavenly Jerusalem*. For direction in our journey, God hath given us a *chart* or *map*, the HOLY SCRIPTURES. *Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.* John v. 39.

But now the *Church of Rome* tells me, that these *scriptures* are a very imperfect and uncertain direction: *in which there are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction.*

And therefore I am admonished, not to meddle with these *scriptures* myself, which are very dangerous things, but to resign both them and my own judgment into the hands of the *Church*, and then I am safe. For the *Church* being *infallible*, can infallibly interpret all difficult places of scripture: and can furnish me with such a guide as will *certainly* direct me.

Upon this peremptory summons, it is my repeated request; that you would particularly instruct me in a matter of such great concernment.

Tell me distinctly who this guide is, and I do again faithfully promise to resign myself to his conduct.

For I do firmly assure you, *fathers*, I am so far from declining conviction (the usual objection against Protestants) that I have diligently inquired after this *infallible guide* in all places, and in all companies. I have not only proposed this question to the learned men of your *Church* in personal discourse; but have also given myself the freedom to read such of your authors, as I thought most likely to instruct me. More especially I have had the curiosity to read the stories of your eminent *converts*. Who generally pretend to have left the *Church of England*,

land, for want of such an infallible guide, which they fancy to have found in the *Church of Rome*.

Master Wadsworth complains to his old friend *Bishop Bedell*, that this, amongst other motives, did occasion him to forsake the *Church of England*, viz. *the want of a certain, human, external, infallible judge to interpret scripture, and define questions of faith without error.* p. 328. And *Mr. Cressy* gives this reason of his conversion to *Rome*; because the *Church of England* is a *failable* and a *fallible Church*. *Append. to Exomol.* p. 480.

Now since *Mr. Cressy* doth more particularly treat of the *infallibility* of the *Church of Rome* (it being the whole design of his *Exomologesis* to explain and defend it) I did with great exactness observe that discourse.) Wherein I could not but take particular notice of these memorable words. p. 501.

“ *When it is said, The Church is infallible, though this be commonly understood of all the whole Church in general; yet, when we say, she is an infallible guide; it is most ordinarily understood of the Church, speaking by some authorised person or persons, representing the whole body.*”

Here, *fathers*, I did rationally expect; that *Mr. Cressy* should have particularly declared; who this infallible representative is.

What a fair opportunity was here offered distinctly to instruct us in this weighty matter? And therefore you must needs allow me to be surprized at his following concession.

“ *About this representative there is diversity of opinions among Catholics.*”

Which in plain terms is this, *Catholics are not yet agreed who is this infallible guide.*

And now, *fathers*, pray consider how you have trifled with me.

You call hard upon me, to leave the *Church of England*. I ask you, why? Because otherwise, *say you*, you cannot hope to be

be saved. For *without faith it is impossible to please God*; and the *Church of England* hath no faith.

But why, *fathers*, hath she no faith? Doth she not believe the antient creeds? And doth she not acknowledge those very scriptures out of which those creeds are taken?

That's true. But, alas! these signify nothing. Because she hath no *infallible guide* to direct her, how to understand these scriptures, or to interpret those creeds. I do then demand; where such a guide may be found? You say, *in the Church of Rome*. I do next very pertinently ask you; *who is this unerring guide; that so, by submitting myself to his directions, I may receive the benefit of his conduct?*

And what shuffling answers you do give me to so plain a question, I am even astonished to repeat.

And now, *fathers*, though what I have already proposed is too just a prejudice against your Church (for if you cannot agree amongst yourselves, there is little hope you should satisfy me) yet further to convince you, how desirous I am, if possible, of an happy accommodation, I do thus proceed in my inquiry.

You have already granted,

That this *infallible guide* is some authorised person or persons representing the whole body.

Let us therefore impartially examine, who is this infallible *representative* in your Church?

Which certainly can be no other but one of these *two*.

1. His *holiness* the Pope. Or,
2. A General Council.

As to the *first*; I have been told that though the *Jesuits*, the *Canonists*, and such like court-parasites, have said much for it, yet it is generally esteemed, by the more sober and learned Catholics,

tholics, a very weak and ungrounded opinion; and as such is usually rejected.

Wherein the PAPIST REPRESENTED (who I suppose speaks the sense of your whole party here in *England*) doth thus fully instruct us, *p.* 42.

“ Though some do allow him (the Pope) the assistance of
“ a *divine infallibility*, without being in a *general council*, yet
“ he is satisfied, 'tis only their *opinion*, and not their *faith*.
“ *There being no obligation from the Church, of assenting to any*
“ *such doctrine.*”

From whence I do observe;

That a *Papist truly represented* is satisfied; *the Pope is not infallible.* And indeed, *fathers*, so am I. Thus far then we are agreed.

Let us now proceed with the same candour to examine the pretences of a *general council*.

Which I might very briefly, and yet very effectually thus dispatch.

1. If general councils confirmed by the pope have actually erred.
2. If general councils confirmed by popes, have made definitions and decrees plainly contradictory one to the other.
3. If a general council confirmed by one pope, hath been condemn'd by a general council, confirmed by another pope: then, *fathers*, I hope you will be forced to acknowledge, unless contradictions can be true, that *a general council is not infallible.*

As to the truth of these particulars; the *divines* of the *Church of England* have clearly proved them to you, beyond possibility of a reply. And are still ready to refresh your memories when you shall desire it.

As

As to myself, because such enlargement doth require more skill, in *ecclesiastical* story, and the records of the *Church*, than can be expected from a person of my mean capacity; I shall therefore wave that kind of proof. And shall thus give you my thoughts, in a more plain and familiar manner.

You say, *fathers*, that a general council is this infallible judge, this unerring guide. Let me therefore ask you this short question :

Is there any general council at this day actually now sitting, in any part of the christian world?

I am sure you cannot pretend that there is. And if not, then there is no *living* infallible guide in the present *Church of Rome*.

I have proposed this scruple to some of your learned men; and the answer they have returned is this (which if you do not like, pray give me a better) *viz.* That though there is no council actually now sitting, as to their persons; yet there are many councils still extant in their doctrines: Those reverend fathers do still live in their *canons* and *decrees*; which being committed to writing by faithful scribes and notaries; and authentic copies thus taken, they were thence published for the direction of the Church in all succeeding ages.

To which I do thus humbly reply.

How often, *fathers*, have you told us; That *no meer writing can be a judge* (this being the very reason why you deny that capacity to the *holy scriptures*.)

“ For by a judge, all wise men understand a person endued
“ with life and reason; able to hear, to examine, to declare his
“ mind to the disagreeing parties: Which no meer writing,
“ which is deaf, dumb, and inanimate can be able to do.”

Vid. *Charity maintained by Catholics*. cap. 2. §. 3. p. 42.

So that these canons being but a *writing*, they may indeed be a *rule*, but they cannot be a *judge*.

C

And

And hereupon, for my better satisfaction, pray resolve me these *queries*.

1. Suppose a controversy should arise about the *canons* of any council, how and in what sense they are to be understood; can such *decrees* determine themselves and explain their own meaning?

If so, then

2. Why must not the same privilege be granted to the *holy* scriptures? Why cannot the writings of God judge and determine controversies, as well as the writings of men?

3. Whether cannot the spirit of God, by which the *scriptures* were indited, express his mind as plainly and intelligibly as the fathers of any council?

But now if you are forced to grant (and I do not see how you can avoid it) that when the decrees of any council shall be controverted, there must be some living judge to determine such difference: I am then still to *seek*, what I doubt I *shall* never find. For after all this search; and the most strict and diligent attention to your learned instructions; the substance of what you have said in the matter is no more than this.

The Church of Rome is infallible.

That's certain. 'Tis heresy to doubt it.

But what this *infallibility* signifies? Whence you yourselves had it? Or, where we Protestants (who are so much upbraided with the want of it) may find it?

What controversies hath it decided? What texts of scripture hath it explained? What differences hath it composed?

These, *fathers*, are some of those questions, which at your best leisure I desire you to resolve me.

A
D E F E N C E
OF THE
P L A I N M A N's
R E P L Y
TO THE
CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES.

B E I N G

A further Examination of the pretended INFALLIBILITY
of the Church of ROME.

L O N D O N,

Printed in the Year 1688. Re-printed for J. and J. RIVINGTON in *St. Paul's*
Church-Yard, and S. PARKER, Bookseller in *Oxford*, 1751.

DEFENCE
OF THE
PLAIN
REPLY
TO THE
CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES.

BEING

A further Examination of the pretended Infallibility
of the Church of ROME.

L O N D O N.

Printed in the Year 1688. Re-printed for J. and J. Parkinson in St. Paul's
Church-Yard, and S. Parker, Bookbinder in Oxford-Street.

that he may be a more useful guide, than
 to be many times himself to his conduct? Whence the
 not being able to give him any tolerable satisfaction; the plough-

know, that he is more firm and affectionate to the Church of
 than he was before. And in charity to the rest of his
 of the same capacity with himself (by the advice and

ADVERTISEMENT.

S*SOME papers having lately passed, betwixt a Romish Mis-
 sioner and a Country Parson, it may not be improper so far
 to gratify the reader's curiosity, as to acquaint him with the oc-
 casion of them. Which shall thus briefly be represented under the
 title of*

The ARGUMENT.

A*Romish priest being wearied with the noise and hurry of
 the town, for his diversion and health, retires into the
 country. Where observing a farmer, in a pleasant field holding
 his plough, in hopes of a convert he enters into a close dis-
 course with him. The ploughman at first is much startled with his
 address; and fenceth as well as his mother-wit will allow him;
 and gives very good reason (according to some directions received
 from his parson) why he ought not to engage in discourses of
 that nature. Till at last, conquered by the civility or importu-
 nity of the priest, he admits the debate. And to bring the
 matter to a short issue, the farmer puts him to prove the infal-
 libility of his Church. And withal desires him particularly to
 inform him; Who is this living infallible judge, that so upon
 occasion,*

occasion he may consult him? *Who is this unerring guide, that so he may submit himself to his conduct? Wherein the priest not being able to give him any tolerable satisfaction; the ploughman is so far from embracing the communion of the Church of Rome, that he is more firm and affectionate to the Church of England than he was before. And in charity to the rest of his brethren, of the same capacity with himself (by the advice and with the direction of his parson) he publisheth the substance of the conference under the title of, The Plain Man's Reply to the Catholic Missionaries.* Which together with the forementioned directions of his parson, called; *The Country Parson's Admonition to his Parishioners*, was so displeasing to the *Romish* party; that they have published a pretended confutation of them both; titled, *The Plain Man's Answer to his Country Parson's Admonition. Together with the Missioner's Answer, to the Plain Man's Reply.* To the former of these an answer hath been lately published, with this title, viz. *A Defence of the Country Parson's Admonition against the Exceptions of the Plain Man's Answer.* And a Reply to the latter, being a full vindication of the Plain Man against the Missioner, is attempted in this following discourse.

T H E

T H E

Country PARSON's Reflections

UPON THE

MISSIONER's ANSWER.

A Parishioner of mine, an honest *Plain Man*, was prevailed upon by the importunity of others, to hearken to the whispers of a Romish priest. Who suggested to him, that as without *faith* there is no salvation, so without *infallibility* there is no faith; and that this infallibility is only to be found in the Church of Rome.

The *Plain Man*, with whom saying and doing are two things, very bluntly demands; how it appears that the Church of Rome is infallible? And desires the *priest to give him in writing one or two of his best arguments, and then promiseth to consider them at his leisure.* Country Parson's Admonition. pag. 7.

The Missioner assures him, he can prove by undeniable Arguments; that the Church of Rome is infallible. Which he will undertake in this method. By shewing,

“ 1. *What*

- “ 1. *What is meant by the Church of Rome.*
“ 2. *What is meant by infallible.*
“ 3. *From whence the Church of Rome had this infallibility.*
“ 4. *How they prove it.*
“ 5. *Where we may find this Church.*
“ 6. *And lastly, How we may know when she speaks to us,*
“ *and what she teacheth.* Missioner's Answer. pag. 9.

This paper being sent to the *Plain Man* he gives it to his Parson, and desires his judgment of it: intimating further, that the *Missioner* thinks these arguments very convincing, and therefore expects an answer to them. pag. 21.

Now in order to the *Plain Man*'s satisfaction (and the *Missioner*'s also if he please to accept it) I do thus examine that paper in its own method.

And *first* I am not satisfied with his description of the Church of Rome, viz.

“ By the Church of Rome we do not mean the particular
“ diocese of Rome, or any particular church or assembly, but
“ the *Catholic Church* spread over the face of the whole world,
“ in communion with the *Bishop of Rome*, the supreme pastor
“ of the Church of Christ. *Missioner's answer*, p. 9.

In this description here are *three* things supposed.

1. *That the Church of Rome is the catholic Church.*
2. *That the bishop of Rome is the supreme pastor of the Church of Christ.*
3. *That the catholic Church, spread over the face of the whole world, is in communion with the bishop of Rome.*

The *two* former are deny'd, therefore I expect their proof. And the *third* must not be granted without its due explication.

I. As

1. As to the first, the *Plain Man* hath told him; that though it is the noted "mistake of some writers, to call the Church of *Rome* the Church *catholic* (and then to apply all the promises of protection and preservation to her as such) yet this "is only their own confident supposal, without the least manner of proof." *Plain Man's Reply*, p. 9.

Being thus admonished, why did not the priest confirm this proposition wherein his cause is so much concern'd? Nay! why did he thus prevaricate in omitting to do it, when so fair an occasion was offer'd?

For, several texts of scripture (of which more anon) being cited by the Missioner, to prove the *infallibility* of the Church of *Rome*, the *Plain Man* thus replies.

"I must confess these are great priviledges, but I have been told these belong to the universal Church composed of all Christians. So that if you can shew me

"5. That these promises were made to the *Roman Church*, or that *she* is the only true Church of Christ, I shall most willingly hear you." *Missioner's Answer*, p. 14.

This demand was rational and to the purpose. To which the *Missioner* makes this answer,

"This may be easily made clear to you, if you do but remember what I told you we mean by the *Roman catholic Church*." p. 15.

And what was it that he had told him? Even this (but then you must take it upon his word) *the Church of Rome is the catholic Church*. And further this deponent saith not.

Now in kindness to this Missioner (that I may direct him in his proof, which I'll assure him is expected from him) I shall a little more distinctly examine this matter.

Whoever shall pretend to prove that the Church of *Rome* is the catholic Church, he must consider,

1. The nature of the christian Church. 2. He must examine, why and upon what account the christian Church is stiled catholic. And from thence he will be prepared to determine; whether the Church of Rome is the catholic Church.

As to the nature of the christian Church, the Trent catechism, out of St. Augustine, doth thus instruct us.

Ecclesia est populus fidelis per universum orbem dispersus. Cat. Rom. p. 10. c. 107. Sect. 2.

The christian Church is, The company of believers (a society of men professing the faith of Christ) dispersed and scatter'd over all the world.

And this Church is stiled catholic in these two respects.

1. With respect to the persons who make this profession. Who are not now confined to one nation, or limited to one people, as the Jewish Church was. But in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. Hence St. Augustine, Ep. 170. tells us: The Church is called Catholic, because it is spread throughout the whole world.

2. With respect to the faith which is professed. And so catholic is the same with sound and orthodox. In which sense particular churches, and the bishops of those churches, in antient writings, are often stiled catholic; in opposition to heretics and schismatics.

Now in whether of these two respects will this Missioner pretend, that the Church of Rome is the catholic Church?

1. Will he affirm that she is catholic with respect to the persons who make this profession? Then, she is the whole Church. Then, there is no other Church but the Roman (taking in those other churches which submit to her authority). In short, then the Roman-catholics alone do make profession of christianity, and there are no other christians in the world but Papists.

If

If this be his meaning, for his conviction, let me then desire him to resolve me.

When any member of the Church of *England* is reconciled, as they phrase it, to the Church of *Rome*; Was that person, before his reconciliation, a member of the Church of *Christ*, or was he not? Was he a christian, or was he not? If not, Why then do they not admit him into the Church by baptism?

But if this Missioner is forced to grant; that such a convert was a christian, and a member of the Church of *Christ* even before he was a Roman-catholic; then, there are other Christians besides Papists; and there are other Churches besides the Roman. Then the Church of *Rome* is not the whole Church; and consequently, in this first sense of the word, is not the catholic Church. But,

Will this Missioner pretend, that the Church of *Rome* is the catholic Church, in the other notion of the word, *i. e.* sound and orthodox?

If this be his project it is then expected, that he prepare us an answer to that large bill of indictment, which the reformed writers have prefer'd against her. And when he shall have given us satisfaction, as to all those errors and corruptions with which she is charged; as for instance, the sacrifice of the mass, transubstantiation, half-communion, prayers in an unknown tongue, worship of images, invocation of saints, purgatory and prayers for the dead, &c. then, and not till then, we may grant; that the Church of *Rome* is Catholic in this second sense of the word: And that she is a sound and orthodox church.

And so I leave him to his defence (which he may prepare at his leisure) and proceed to consider his second supposition, *viz.*

2. That the bishop of *Rome* is the supreme pastor of the Church of *Christ*.

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This is the fundamental article of the *Romish* faith. And yet there is not one word of it in the apostles creed, which is the sum of the *christian* faith. No nor yet in the *holy scriptures*, out of which that creed was taken.

That *de facto* this supremacy was not granted to the bishops of *Rome*, in the *first* and purest ages of the Church, but that their encroachments were still opposed; is most evidently shewed by the learned *Dr. Cave*, in *A Dissertation concerning the Government of the Antient Church*.

That the *Britannic Churches* were ever exempted from all foreign jurisdiction for the first *six hundred* years, and so ought to continue (if this Missioner will be so modest as to hearken to instruction) the renowned archbishop *Brambal* hath undeniably proved.

And therefore, if prosperous usurpation may be called in question, I would ask *Quo jure?* This supremacy of the pope whence was it? *From heaven or of men?* Who gave him this authority, to rule and govern the whole Church of Christ?

Their usual pretence for such exorbitant power, is known to be this, *viz.*

That our blessed Saviour, before his ascension, did constitute *St. Peter* his vicar, deputy, and vicegerent; and as such gave him a monarchical supremacy and jurisdiction over the rest of the apostles, and the whole Church. The which supremacy was not personal and temporary, to cease with his person (as the apostleship did) but was to be transfer'd to his successor. The which successor (say they) is the bishop of *Rome*.

This is their plea. In confirmation of which these following propositions must be established.

1. That *St. Peter* had a primacy over the apostles.
2. That this primacy did include a supremacy of power, and dominion or jurisdiction over the apostles.

3. That

(II)

3. That St. *Peter's* primacy with its rights and prerogatives was not personal, but derivable to his successors.

4. That St. *Peter* was bishop of *Rome*, and continued till his death in possession of that office.

5. That the bishops of *Rome*, as successors of St. *Peter* (according to Gods institution and by original right derived thence) should have an universal supremacy and jurisdiction over the christian Church.

6. That in fact the *Roman* bishops continually from St. *Peter's* time have enjoyed and exercised this sovereign power.

7. That this power is indefectible and unalterable.

These are the pillars of the *Romish* cause. And therefore if this Missioner will be shewing his skill, let him practise upon these points. But when he attempts it, he shall find to his cost, that the learned Dr. *Barrow* hath examined them before him; in his excellent *treatise* of the *Pope's Supremacy*. To which I refer him.

So much for that. I am next to examine his *third* supposition, viz.

3. That the catholic Church, spread over the face of the whole world, is in communion with the bishop of *Rome*.

To determine this matter, we must consider the nature of church-communion. Of which briefly thus.

Church-communion, to speak properly, doth chiefly respect the universal Church. For to be in communion with the Church, it is to be a member of the *Church catholic*; in plain terms it is to be a christian; as we were made by baptism, the seal of the new covenant. Into which covenant being thus admitted, we are united to the whole Church. And by virtue of this union, as church-members, have a common right to all church-privileges and blessings, and a common obligation to all church-offices and duties.

The

The which communion (or communication) in religious duties, though it be limited and restrained, in the use and exercise of it, to particular churches and congregations (for all christians in the world cannot meet together) yet all such acts of worship (as *prayers, sacraments, hearing the word, &c.*) are performed by us, as members of the catholic Church. And therefore we are obliged to communicate in these duties, not only with our own national Church, but also, if our occasions do call us abroad, with any other Church in the world; provided that we may do it upon catholic terms and conditions.

These things premised, we are now prepared to determine, how far the catholic church, spread over the face of the whole world, is in communion with the bishop of *Rome*.

Which will easily be decided by observing, that there is a *two-fold* communion.

1. Of *co-ordination* or *friendship*.

2. *Subordination* or *subjection*.

As to the former we may safely affirm; all the churches in the world are thus far in communion with the bishop of *Rome*; that they may own him for a christian bishop; as acknowledging the Church of *Rome* to be a true Church, though indeed a very corrupt Church. And if they do not communicate further with him, it is his own fault.

But this it seems will not satisfy this Missioner: who most vainly fancies that there is no communion without subjection. And that no Church can be in communion with the Church of *Rome*, without submitting to her authority.

When therefore it is affirmed; that the catholic Church is thus subject to the bishop of *Rome*: if this Missioner pleads; that *de facto* all other Churches are actually thus subject; we then deny it; for the greater part of christendom doth protest against the errors, and oppose the usurpations of the bishop of *Rome*.

Rome. But if he contends that *de jure* they ought so to be, and that this Subjection is their duty, then let him prove it.

What I have now said, is sufficient to convince this Missioner, of his mistaken notion of the *Church of Rome*. Which if he thinks fit to defend, he must then prove.

1. *That the Church of Rome is the catholic Church.* i. e. He must convince us, either (1.) That she is the *whole Church*, and that there is no other Church besides her; or else (2.) That she is the only *true and orthodox Church*.

2. *That the bishop of Rome is the supreme pastor of the Church of Christ.* Which when he hath proved, I shall then grant him.

3. *That the catholic Church spread over the face of the whole world, is in communion with,* i. e. is subject to *the bishop of Rome*.

And here should I now hold my pen, and proceed no further in my reflections, I have given this Missioner work enough.

But if he will be so modest as to confess his mistake, I'll help him to a better definition of the *Church of Rome*, and less liable to exception.

“ By the *Roman Church*, we do not understand the particular
“ diocese of *Rome*; but we understand, that vastly extended
“ community of christians which hold communion with the
“ *Church of Rome*, submitting themselves to the bishop of *Rome*
“ as to their head; so that whatsoever he decrees with a general
“ council they embrace as the definition of the true Church,
“ which they hold infallible.” *Question of Questions*, Sect. 17.
P. 373.

Had this Missioner been so prudent as to have consulted this author (whom he was pleased to recommend for the *Plain Man's* satisfaction) we might then *make short work on't*: and without further diversion, might have proceeded to the *second inquiry*, viz.

2. *What is meant by infallible?*
Which he thus explains.

“ By

“ By the word *infallibility* we do not mean only *indefectibility* and *duration*, but an *unerring direction* in necessary points of faith. So that when we say the Church (of Rome) is infallible, we mean; that Almighty God hath given an authoritative power to the Church (of Rome) to declare, in case of differences, which is the *faith which was once delivered to the saints*, Jude 3. So that in case of differences about the sense of *scripture*, or any divinely revealed truths, the Church (of Rome) is to decide the difference, and end the controversy. And to perform this, we say, she is assisted by the spirit of Almighty God, who, as he hath ordained her for our direction, so he secures her from erring whilst she directs. Which assistance we call infallibility.” *Missioner's Answer*, p. 10. This he endeavours to confirm, by inquiring *thirdly*.

“ 3. From whence had she (the Church of Rome) this authority of unerring guidance?” p. 11.

To which he gives us this answer.

“ You must not think that the Church (of Rome) has this power from herself; for we know that all men may fail; all communities and assemblies are subject to error and mistakes (*where then is the infallibility of oral tradition?*) But she has it from God himself; *who is faithful and true to his promises.*” Ibid. But,

4. “ How doth it appear that the Church of Rome is thus infallible, and that God hath made her these promises of unerring guidance?” Ibid.

“ This he tells us, is evident from the plain testimonies of holy scripture, both old and new testament.” Ibid.

Thus far I do readily subscribe; that if the Church of Rome is infallible, she must have this privilege from God himself. And if there is such a promise of unerring guidance it must be found in the holy scriptures.

Let

Let it therefore appear from those sacred writings, that God hath promised such an unerring guidance to the Church of *Rome*, and I shall then dispute no further, but submit to her direction.

Now to prove this *infallibility*, this Missioner hath cited *twenty* places of scripture, which the *Question of Questions* tells him are in the bible. But how little they are to his purpose, I do thus endeavour to convince him, by examining them in their order.

His *first* text is that noted place, *Deut. 17. 8, &c.* From whence the argument is this: *The Jewish Church was infallible; therefore the Church of Rome is infallible.*

To which I thus answer.

Both propositions, *antecedent* and *consequent*, are false.

And, *first*, it doth not appear from this place of scripture (nor indeed from any other) that the *Jewish Church* was infallible.

From what circumstance in this text will the Missioner infer such a conclusion?

Was it 1. Because in that Church there was a supreme court of judicature, *from whence there was no appeal*? Or 2. Because *the priests, the Levites, and the judge were to give sentence*? Or 3. Was it because *the contemner of this sentence was to be put to death*.

Now if these passages do prove *infallibility*, there was then infallibility in the *state* as well as in the *Church*; in the *judge*, the civil magistrate no less than the priest; and in every inferior priest as well as the high-priest.

But I need not insist on these suggestions; since there is no arguing against matter of fact. If therefore it doth appear, in any instance, that the *Jewish Church* (or the *Roman*) hath actually erred; 'tis too late to pretend that she is infallible.

To convince him that she hath erred, I demand of this Missioner: The sentence of the *sanhedrim*, whereby our blessed Saviour was condemned as a blasphemer, was it a just and legal

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sentence,

sentence, or was it not? If not: Then the *Jewish Church*, which pronounced it, was not infallible. And consequently this argument, so triumphantly repeated, is utterly lost.

But if this Missioner dares pretend;

That the sentence of the *sanhedrim* was a legal sentence; and that the holy *Jesus* was justly condemn'd as a blasphemer; let him take heed; least, contending for *infallibility*, he forfeits his *christianity*.

However, for argument's sake, suppose it were granted; that the *Jewish Church* was *infallible*; must it thence be inferred; that the christian Church hath the same privilege? Yes doubtless, thinks this Missioner. For to her hath been given a covenant with better promises. True! But was *infallibility* any of those promises? This ought not to be supposed but proved.

But now let it be further granted; that the *christian Church* is *infallible*. What's this to the Church of *Rome*? Is there no other Church besides the *Roman*? Or, Is she only the true Church of *Christ*? Let the Missioner prove this; and I shall most willingly bear him. Missioner's Answer, p. 15.

Secondly, He fills up his pages with several other places out of the old testament. Which I shall only transcribe, and then it will sufficiently appear they are nothing to his purpose.

" He tells us, the Church shall be like a mountain upon the
 " top of mountains, Isa. 22. Like a tabernacle seated in the sun,
 " Ps. 18. 4. That all nations shall flow unto her. That kings shall
 " be her nursing fathers, and queens her nursing mothers, Isa. 49.
 " 23. That all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto
 " the Lord, and all the kindred of the nations shall worship before
 " him." Psal. 22. 27.

Besides these plain prophecies which (speak not one word of the *infallibility* of the Church of *Rome* but) only shew the *visibility*

stability, universality and duration of the christian church, which are not now the dispute, and therefore shall be consider'd when occasion is offered ;

" I say, besides these, we are told that *in this house of the God of Jacob, he himself will teach us his ways ; and will judge amongst the nations*, Isa. 2. 3, 4. And then certainly we shall neither be taught an error, nor have a wrong sentence." *Missioner's Answer*, p. 12, 13.

That's granted. God will certainly teach us truth. And we shall never err. Provided, that we follow his instructions.

Now all extraordinary ways being ceased, the divine wisdom ordinarily doth instruct us only by the scriptures. Which, as St. Peter hath admonished us, are *a more sure word of prophecy than a voice from heaven. Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.* 2 Pet. 1. 19.

These *holy scriptures* are the good old way. By walking in which the *way-faring men, though fools, shall not err.* Isa. 35. 8. *Missioner's Answer*, p. 12. 21, 22. *For the testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple.* Psal. 19. 7.

But now if the Church of Rome, for instance, shall leave this good old way of truth, to wander in by-paths of her own ; if she shall neglect, vilify and forsake the holy scriptures, to follow her own blind traditions ; 'tis not her confidence that she is in the right, that can keep her out of the ditch, or secure her from falling.

" He tells us moreover, *That God will not be wroth with his Church, neither shall his kindness depart from her, nor the covenant of his peace be removed. That all her children shall be taught of the Lord. That she shall be established in righteousness. That whosoever shall gather together against her, shall fall for her sake. And that every tongue that shall rise against her in judgment shall be condemned by her. This is the heritage of the*

" *servants of the Lord and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord.* Isa. 54.

" Furthermore he tell us, that God hath made a covenant with his Church. That *his spirit shall be upon her, and his words which he hath put into her mouth, shall not depart out of her mouth, nor out of the mouth of her seed, nor out of the mouth of her seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* Isa. 59. 20, 21. You see here a promise to the Church in all ages, that she shall speak the very words which God shall put into her mouth, and therefore no errors." p. 13.

To all this flourish I briefly reply in the words of Mr. Chillingworth.

" If the Church of Rome be Zion and *they that turn from iniquity in Jacob*, they may have title to this covenant. If not; they must forbear, and leave it to the Jews after their conversion: To whom it is appropriated by a more infallible interpreter than the pope; I mean St. Paul, Rom. 11. 26. And it seems the Church of Rome also believes as much; for otherwise why does she in the margin of her bible, send us to that place of St. Paul for an exposition?" *Additional Discourses*, p. 36.

Out of the New Testament he hath cited several texts, which I shall set down in their order, with short remarks upon them.

" Matth. 16. 18. *Upon this rock I will build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* pag. 13.

This text hath been so often and so fully answer'd, that I admire the confidence of this Missioner, who at this time can pretend to urge it.

In short. This text is a promise of the *perpetuity* of the catholic Church: But not of the *infallibility* (no nor the *perpetuity*) of the Roman Church.

" Matth. 28. 20. *And I am with you alway even unto the end of the world.* Amen. What

What *you*? Only *you* of the Church of *Rome*? Are there no other pastors and teachers besides *you* in the Church of Christ?

But doth *presence* signify *infallibility*? Hath he not promised; *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*, Matth. 18. 20. And are all such assemblies infallible?

“ John 14. 16. *I will pray the father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.*

“ Ver. 17. *Even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.*

“ Ver. 26. *He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

“ Chap. 16. ver. 13. *When he the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come.*”

What hath the Church of *Rome* to do with these scriptures? Did the Church of *Rome* ever hear the sermons and discourses of our blessed Saviour? If not: How can they be brought to her remembrance? Is it not therefore evident, from several passages in both those chapters, that these promises do belong only to the apostles, who personally conversed with our Saviour. As being made to those, *To whom he had many more things to say, which they were not yet able to bear.* To those who had been with Christ from the beginning. To those from whom Christ was now going away. And whom he had before told of his departure. Lastly, to whom *the Holy Ghost was to shew things to come.* A promise, which the present Church of *Rome* dares not pretend to.

If here it shall be urged, that the clause *for ever* must needs extend this promise beyond their own persons, and so to their successors. To this I answer,

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1. This *for ever* signifies no more than to the end of their lives. According to those known forms of speech. *This is mine for ever* ; or, *this shall be yours for ever*.

2. Suppose these promises had been made to them and their successors? Had they no successors but them of the *Roman Church*? This hath been confidently pretended, but was never yet proved.

“ *Matth. 18. 17. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*” pag. 14.

What *Church* is this that must be *heard*? The *Church of Rome* only? Nothing less. 'Tis evident by the *Church* in this text, can be meant no other than that particular *Church*, of which the offending brother was a member.

But suppose that by the *Church* were meant the *Church of Rome*, and that this *Church of Rome* were to be *heard* and obey'd. What then? Is she therefore infallible? Are all those that are to be heard and obey'd infallible? Are not kings and parents and masters and prelates and abbots; are not all these to be heard and obey'd? And are all these infallible?

“ *Matth. 28. 19. compared with Mark 16. 15, 16. Go ye therefore and teach all nations — and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*” p. 14.

What then? Therefore *the Church of Rome is infallible*. This is such a demonstration as *Euclid* never dreamed on.

“ *1 Tim. 3. 15. — That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.* Nay! even particular churches, as sound parts and members of the catholic, and the bishops of those churches, may be adorned with that title.

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But what's this to the Church of *Rome*? Which is neither the catholic Church, nor a sound member of it.

Indeed had *Timothy* been bishop of *Rome*, I should then have been obliged to examine, how and in what sense a particular Church may be called, *the pillar and ground of the truth*, without being infallible. But since he was bishop of *Ephesus* and not of *Rome*; and since the infallibility of *Rome* and not of *Ephesus* is to be proved, there is no occasion for that inquiry.

“ *Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 14. And he gave some, apostles: and some prophets: and some, evangelists: and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints—that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in him in all things, who is the head, even Christ.*” p. 14.

Amongst all these orders here's no mention of an infallible judge of controversies, much less that this judge is only to be found in the Church of *Rome*.

And thus I have briefly shewed, how impertinently these scriptures have been urged by this Missioner. When I say *impertinently* I do not thereby blame the conduct of this writer (who hath taken the true method to defend his Church) but by that word do only express the weakness of his cause. Which hath been so often and so effectually exposed, that it may well puzzle, even the skill of a Missioner, to make a decent defence. And indeed it is no little surprizing to observe, how perplexing and confused an answer is hereby given, to the most plain and easy question.

The *Plain Man* having often been admonished, to return (as they phrase it) into the bosom of the Church of *Rome*; and as a further inducement to hasten his change, having been assur'd, that *the*
Church

Church of Rome is infallible; and that Protestant Churches, for want of this *infallibility*, are neither able to interpret scripture, nor compose differences in matters of faith: I say being thus admonished, he makes this short reply, *viz.* That if the Church of *Rome* is infallible, as they pretend, it would be a seasonable charity to instruct him in this matter.

This is the substance of that little treatise. Which indeed is no other than a paraphrase upon this question:

“ *Who is this infallible judge*, that so upon occasion I may consult him? Tell me distinctly: Who is this unerring guide? Where may I find him? And I do faithfully promise to resign myself to his conduct.” *Plain Man's Reply*, p. 12, 13.

Observe now what answer the Missioner hath given to this important question. Pray mark it: 'Tis worth your notice.

“ Mistake me not I pray, I tell you distinctly, that the Church is my infallible guide. And this Church is to be found spread over the face of the whole world. I may therefore securely rely upon what she teacheth, without troubling myself to search whether this or that particular person in her be infallible or no.” *Missioner's Answer*, p. 16.

A most learned determination. And very much, no doubt, to the satisfaction of the *Plain Man*. For whose further instruction, I do thus expostulate with this Missioner.

The Country Parson to the Missioner.

YOU say, Sir, *the Church is my infallible guide*. Pray, what do you mean by this *Church*? Is it, in your language, the *teaching Church*, or the *learning part* of the Church? p. 14. Or, in more proper terms, is it the Church *representative*, or the Church *diffusive*? Sure not the Church *diffusive*; for that comprehends every *private* christian, even the most ordinary mechanic. And in case of differences about the sense of scripture, or
any

any divinely revealed truths, I hope these are no fit persons to decide the difference, and end the controversy. Missioner's Answer. p. 10.

It remains therefore, that the church representative is this infallible guide. And then our next thought is to enquire; who this infallible representative is? And tho' you assured the *Plain Man*, that "he may securely rely upon what the Church teacheth, without troubling himself to search whether this or that particular person in her be infallible or no;" p. 16. yet in contradiction to your self you are forced to declare;

"That a general council, the supreme court of judicature, is the legal infallible representative of the Church. p. 18. So that whether the controversy be about the sense of scripture, or about the canon of a council, there must be a living judge to determine it; and this I say, is the Church in her general councils, in which she is secured from error." p. 19.

And now why was not this acknowledgment made at the first? When the *Plain Man* desired you to tell him distinctly; who is this infallible guide: why did you not then roundly and boldly answer; *I tell you distinctly a general council is my infallible guide?* Why such shuffling and shifting in so plain a matter?

Doth not this evidently confirm the *Plain Man's* suspicion; that since your discourses about this infallibility are so various and uncertain, expressed with such diffidence and caution, he can scarce think you believe it your selves? *Plain Man's Reply.* p. 8.

However at last you have taken the courage to declare; that a general council is this living infallible judge, this unerring guide.

The truth of which pretence I do thus briefly examine.

In St. Matthew's gospel the *Plain Man* finds these words. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink ye ALL of it. Matth. 26, 27.

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This text, he observes, is controverted betwixt the two churches, and the sense of it disputed.

The Church of *England* (in obedience to that last precept of her Lord, *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*, (Matth. 28. 20.) hath thus determined.

The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay-people : for both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministred to all christian men alike.
ART. 30.

But the Church of Rome (in direct opposition to our Lord's command) hath thus decreed, in her councils of *Constance* and *Trent*.

Although our Redeemer hath instituted the sacrament in his last supper, and hath delivered unto the apostles in both kinds. Yet, the synod hath decreed, that it should be received for a law, that the sacrament be administred in one kind. And whosoever shall say, that by the command of God, all the faithful ought to receive in both kinds; let him be accursed. Concil. Const. Sess. 13. Concil. Trident. Sess. 21. Cap. 2. 3. Can. 1.

Now my *Plain Man* desires to be instructed, whether Church is in the right? The Church of *England* which gives the cup to lay-people; or the Church of Rome which denies it. If his reason might be judge, he is then convinced; that the Church of *England* is orthodox, and holds the truth in this matter. For he thinks it very reasonable, in the administration of a Sacrament, to observe the institution of our blessed Saviour.

But you *Missioners* do tell him, he must not judge by reason, but must submit to the authority of an infallible judge. Well ! 'tis now hoped at last we shall bring the matter to a short issue.

“ You have declared ; *that whether the controversy be about the sense of scripture, or about the canon of a council, there must*
“ *be*

" *be a living judge to determine it; and this you say is a general council.*" Missioner's Answer, p. 19.

I demand therefore, and answer me distinctly. Is there any general council actually now sitting, which (by its infallible authority) may explain this text, and determine these controverted canons, of the councils of *Constance* and *Trent*? If there is such a council, pray where is it to be found? In what part of the world are the fathers assembled? But if there is no such council. Then there is no living infallible judge, to determine this controversy about half-communion.

I am not able to conjecture, what you can possibly say to this, unless you will be so dull as to repeat your own words, viz.
 " That as *there is not any general council actually now sitting, to end our controversies, so neither needs there any, the Church having so fully expressed herself in the canons and definitions of her preceding councils, and in particular in that of Trent.* p. 19.

I say, to urge this would be dull and impertinent. For you your self have confessed; that " these canons of preceding councils are but meer writings, and a meer writing can be no judge, tho' indeed it may be a rule. So that these decrees of former councils being meer writings they cannot, in case of a controversy arising about their sense, determine themselves and explain their own meaning. So that in such a case as this, where there is a controversy about the canon of a council, there must be a living judge, which you say, is a general council."

Now, Sir, to make application. Here is a canon of the council of *Trent* (*Sess. 21. Can. 1.*) that is controverted, and the sense of it disputed. I do again beg of you to resolve me: Where is this living judge, this general council, to determine this canon? If there is none; then the evidence of truth doth

constrain me to pronounce, That there is no living infallible judge in the present Church of *Rome*.

These things are plain and convincing, and admit of no reply. But some men, I observe, are not to be silenced. These Missioners are so trained up, even from their childhood, in the habit of wrangling (which they call disputing) that they will hold the conclusion in spite of all premisses. And you, Sir, for your part will be still saying something, though nothing to the purpose. For thus you go on.

You have granted; that when there is a controversy about the canon of a council, there must then be a living judge to determine it: another council must be called. "But, say you, pray take notice, that we have no such controversy at present. All persons are agreed as to what this Church hath defined, and the sense of her canons is not controverted. We see it in her practice, we read it in her catechisms, we hear it from her pastors, &c." *p. 20.*—Hold, Sir, What a hurry of words is here to no purpose? How! *The sense of her canons not controverted?* Were I not come to the very end of my paper, I would refresh your ears on both sides.

I could convince you of your mistake, from the great *Late-ran council*; Can. 3. *de Hæreticis*. Which hath been the subject of infinite debate and controversy. I forbear to repeat it at large, for a reason that you know; and shall only demand; whether *the deposing power*, is the establish'd doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, or no? *The Papist represented*, P. I. pag. 47. shall resolve you in these words. "For the few authors that are abettors of this doctrine, there are of his communion three times the number, that publicly disown all such authority."

I am

I am not, at present, concerned to examine, how many these few authors may be. *Bellarmin. adv. Barcl. de Potest. Pap.* produceth the testimony of near fourscore for the Pope's temporal power; and almost all of them do plainly own his power of *deposing kings*. But be they more or less; 'tis sufficient for my purpose; that some do affirm what others deny, and consequently; that this third canon of the council of *Lateran* is controverted, and the sense of it disputed.

I could descend to the council of *Trent*: and there remind you of *Soto, Vega, and Catharinus*; who had large disputes about the sense of that council.

From whence the historian makes this remark. " *This seemed to put all men out of hope to understand the meaning of the council, seeing the principal men that were present in it, did not agree.*" pag. 230.

But I must confine myself to this instance now before us. Where indeed the question is not *de facto*, whether you deny the cup to lay-people? For we see it in your practice, we read it in your catechisms, we hear it from your pastors. But the question is *de jure*. Whether the Church of *Rome* hath authority, to null and contradict the institution of our blessed Saviour? And whether in so doing the Church of *Rome* is not mistaken, hath not actually erred, and so lost her infallibility? For, if in this, or any other instance, we can prove that she hath actually erred, 'tis too late to pretend that she is infallible. This is the point wherein my Plain Man desires to be resolved.

And now, where is this living judge, this general council actually now sitting to determine this controversy? I say, *actually now sitting*; for when the council is dissolved, and the prelates and fathers are in another world, it doth then cease to be a living judge.

To

To conclude,

If, as you say, a general council is this infallible judge, this unerring guide; then, since there is no general council actually now sitting, it undeniably follows, that there is no living infallible judge in the present Church of Rome.

The Plain Man to the Missioner.

S I R,

THIS discourse of our parson, against the infallibility of the Church of Rome, seems to me very convincing; and therefore I desire your answer to it.



T H E
Country PARSON's Admonition
TO HIS
PARISHIONERS.

Perfwading them to continue in the
PROTESTANT RELIGION.

With Directions
How to behave themselves when any one designs to seduce
them from the CHURCH of ENGLAND.
To which is added,
A DEFENCE of it against the Papist's Reply; clearly
proving that the Protestant Religion is grounded on
REASON and SCRIPTURE.

L O N D O N,

Printed in the Year 1687. Re-printed for J. and J. RIVINGTON in St. Paul's
Church-Yard, and S. PARKER, Bookseller in Oxford, 1751.

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PARISHIONERS.

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THE
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YOU cannot but observe the restless importunity of the *Romish clergy*, to gain proselytes to their Church. And 'tis probable, that you your selves ere long may happen to hear from them. For they have different forms of address, very plausible and insinuating, fitted to the capacities of all sorts of persons. And therefore that you may not be surprized with these charmers, nor imposed on by their methods of deceit; I do think it my duty thus to caution you against them, by desiring you to observe these *two* directions.

G

I. A

1. *A holy life.*

2. *A modest dependence upon your spiritual guide.*

As to the *first* of these, let me admonish you in the words of St. James; *shew me thy faith by thy works.*

For it signifies nothing what men's *profession* is, if their *practice* is not answerable. And he who is in earnest to save his soul, will doubtless be as much afraid of *debauched courses*, as of *erroneous opinions*: since those do as much, nay more than these, occasion his damnation.

I do therefore beg of you, that as you do profess your selves members of the *Church of England*, so you would take great care that your lives and *conversations* may be answerable to its *doctrine*.

The sum of which doctrine, as it relates to practice, you do find in the *church-catechism*, in answer to those two Questions; *what is thy duty towards God?* and *what is thy duty towards thy neighbour?* which I would advise you very often to read, and seriously to consider. And when by the assistance of God's blessed spirit, you have transcribed those *answers* into your lives: Let me then assure you, that the *ten commandments* thus practised, are the best exposition of your *creed*. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God. John 7. 17. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken, even that which he hath. Mark 4. 25. i. e. He who maketh a right use of that grace and knowledge which God hath given him: he who values and improves it, and is truly thankful for it, to him shall be given more. And he that hath not; i. e. He who hath not made a right use and improvement of his grace or knowledge; from him shall be taken, even that which he hath.

But

But because you must not expect, that God should now teach and instruct you in an extraordinary and miraculous manner, as he did the apostles, but *mediately*, and in the use of means: you are therefore to consider what those means are, which God hath appointed for your direction and instruction. The chief of which (to omit others) is,

A modest dependence upon the ministerial function.

I shall not now insist upon the public offices of the Church, nor your obligation to attend them; as *prayers, sacraments, preaching, &c.* but shall only direct you how to behave yourselves, when any one designs to seduce you from the communion of the *Church of England*.

And the expedients I would propose, are these,

1. Let it be your earnest and daily *prayer* unto God, to give you his grace, *to hold fast the profession of your faith, without wavering*; that you may continue in the same unto your lives end.

2. When you read the *holy scriptures*, and do find some place which is too difficult for you, do not then pretend to *interpret* it yourselves. But beg the direction of your *spiritual guide*; and desire him to shew you how it is to be understood.

3. As far as possible avoid all disputes about religion. *Be not carried about with every wind of doctrine.* Ephes. 4. 14. *i. e.* Do not hearken to the whispers of every bold pretender.

Which to persons of your capacity is very seasonable advice. For, *to convince gainsayers*, and to answer *objections*, is a matter of skill and exercise: And therefore *you* (being a working people, who sweat for your daily bread) may with great modesty acknowledge to your *catholic Missionary*, that you have neither leisure nor ability for such disputes. And consequently you may desire him, since he is disposed to discourse of religion,

that he would rather help your devotion, than disturb your belief.

You may assure him, That you shall not think your faith the less firm and orthodox, because you cannot return an *extemporary* answer to the premeditated objections of a learned adversary.

'Tis possible that such a subtle disputant, as he is, might pretend to prove to you; *that grass is not green*. And he might urge such arguments as would really baffle you; and to which you could not return any tolerable answer. But yet for all his sophistry, though he might silence, he would not satisfy. For you would still believe your senses, and could not think it of any other colour.

If this will not make him to desist; but that he will still be urging the great privileges of the *Romish Church*: *The security of her faith; the excellency of her devotion; the great learning and piety of her clergy, &c.* To this you may reply,

4. That you understand very little of the privileges of the Church of *Rome*. That to know the state of any foreign Church, requires more skill and reading than can be expected from persons of your mean condition. That you are members of the Church of *England*, which is a *true catholic and apostolic Church*. That into this Church you were admitted by baptism; and with this Church you have held communion in all her offices. And consequently to separate from this Church, without some urging cause, is downright *schism*.

For *schism*, in the proper notion of it, is a *causeless separation from that part of the visible Church, of which you are members*.

And therefore he who hath a mind to make you his *prose-lytes*, and will talk pertinently, and to the point; before he can pretend to invite you to the Church of *Rome*, he must first convince you, that it is your duty to *separate* from the Church of *England*. In order to which, he must plainly prove, that
the

the Church of *England* is no sound member of the Church catholic; and consequently, that salvation cannot ordinarily be had in the Church of *England*: At least not with such safety, certainty, and advantage, as it may in the Church of *Rome*.

To prove this he must convince you, that the doctrine of the Church of *England* is either *defective* or *false*. If he pretends that it is *defective*; he must then shew, that there are some truths necessarily to be believed, as articles of faith, which the Church of *England* doth not receive as such. And also that there are some necessary duties, or parts of worship, which the Church of *England* either wholly omits, or else doth not require under any such necessity. And let him here instance to you; what those articles and parts of worship are, wherein our Church is thus *defective*.

But if he affirms, *secondly*, That the doctrine of the Church of *England* is *false*, he must then prove, That the Church of *England* doth require some *unlawful* condition of her communion; and that either in *faith* or *worship*. Plainly thus: He must make it appear, that her faith is *erroneous*, and contrary to the written word of God; *the faith once deliver'd to the saints*: Or else that her worship is *unlawful*, superstitious, or idolatrous. And let him here likewise give you an instance, and distinctly shew you, what particular article of our faith is thus *erroneous*: And what particular part of our worship he thinks *unlawful*. And when he hath made his exceptions, you may then tell him.

5. That your memory is but short; and if he please therefore to give you in writing what he hath now said, together with *one* or *two* of his best arguments upon those points; you may then consider them at your leisure.

If he refuseth to give you such a paper, suspect him for a cheat, and that he comes with a design to impose upon you. For
truth

truth doth not fear the light, but submits its tenets to the strictest examination.

But if he grants your desire ; then bring that paper to *me*, and give me the opportunity to tell you my thoughts of it. And I do here beg and intreat you, nay (as one who must answer for your *souls*, if they perish through my neglect) I require and charge all you in this parish committed to my care ; that you would be so faithful both to your selves and me, as not to be too confident of your own skill : nor to think any argument unanswerable, because you your selves are not able to answer it.

In the affairs of this world, you do judge it prudent to consult other men in their several professions, *physicians, lawyers, &c.*

Should some crafty companion pretend to your *estates*, you would not at the entring of his action, grant him possession ; but would consult the learned in the *law*, how to defend your title.

Pray therefore do not part with your religion for a trick, but be as careful of your souls as you are of your estates.

Let us bold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering; for he is faithful that promised. Heb. 10. 23.



A
D E F E N C E
O F T H E
Country PARSON's Admonition
A G A I N S T T H E
E X C E P T I O N S
O F T H E
P L A I N M A N ' s
A N S W E R.

L O N D O N,

Printed in the Year 1687. Re-printed for J. and J. RIVINGTON in St. Paul's
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L O N D O N,

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Church-Yard, and S. PARKER, Bookseller in *Oxford*, 1751.

A
DEFEINCE
OF THE
County Parson's Administration
AGAINST THE
EXCEPTIONS
OF THE
PLAINMAN'S
ANSWER.

LONDON.

Printed in the Year 1687. Re-printed for J. and J. Rivington in St Paul's Church-Yard, and S. Parker, Bookseller in Ogle 1751.

A

D E F E N C E

OF THE

Country Parson's Admonition.

THERE is a paper called *The Plain Man's Answer, &c.* which hath made some reflections upon *The Country Parson's Admonition*. But how justly and with what success (being directed to make short work on't) I do thus briefly examine.

The exceptions against that little tract are, 1. *General*.
2. *Special*.

1. His *general* exception is against the person who gives you this advice. Who, as he pretends, is not duly qualify'd to write admonitions, because he is not infallible. For thus he expostulates with me.

Sir you do not pretend to such infallibility; and therefore if I must rely upon the ministerial function, I ought, in case it can be found, to seek out such a one as is unerring. (Plain Man's Answer, p. 3.) And again. But what! must I stand to the direction of the ministerial function? Can it secure me that the reverend divines of the Church of England have hit upon the right sense of scripture? But I see they pretend not to such an infallibility. And therefore sir, I must needs tell you, that as when I make choice of a physician or lawyer, I love to chuse the best: so, if I must make choice of a director, I must and will make choice of him, that can give me security that he neither can nor will lead

H

me

me astray ; for I do not love to rely upon any thing that can deceive me. p. 5.

The sum of which charge, when resolved into plain English, is this,

These divines of the Church of England (are so modest) they dare not pretend to be infallible (for they know but in part, 1 Cor. 13. 12.) and therefore they are not fit to be trusted with the care of souls. Do not hearken to them, nor regard their admonitions. But the priests of the Church of Rome (if we could but make you believe it) they are infallible ; i. e. they neither can nor will deceive you.

But are these Missioners in earnest whilst they insinuate such things ? Do they really believe themselves when they talk at this rate ? To put them to the test ;

Ask this very Missioner ; whether *he*, or any other *private* Priest in the Church of Rome, is infallible ? And let him not think to satisfy your doubts by declaring ; *that he doth not find any other, but those called Roman Catholicks, that offer to challenge it. pag. 2.* What's this to the purpose ? We need not be told that they challenge to be infallible ; we do not suspect their confidence, but expect their proof.

But now if this Missioner shall acknowledge, that neither *he* nor any other private Priest is infallible, (and I know he dares not pretend the contrary) you are then to be admonished, from his own principles, that such fallible and erring guides are not fit to be trusted.

You have lately been reminded, *not to pin your faith upon another's sleeve, unless you could be sure that such a one on whom you rely, could not, nor would not deceive you. pag. 3.* And therefore (*my good parishioners*) since somebody must direct you, pray do you consider ; whether it is not more prudent to trust your own Parson, than a fallible pretending Priest ?

If

If this Missioner shall then further propose; that tho' he is not infallible himself, yet he can bring you to an *infallible Church*, and that's as *good*. To this you may answer; that tho' your Parson is not infallible, yet he can bring you to *infallible scriptures*, and that's *better*.

And 'tis pertinent to observe; that the Romanists themselves, as well as *we*, do acknowledge these holy scriptures to be infallible: but we protestants do declare; that the Church of *Rome* is not infallible. And therefore, since in all doubtful cases the safest part is to be chosen (and that's safest, say the Priests, wherein both sides are agreed) do you stick to the scriptures, and let them take their Church.

I shall not now enter upon the merits of the cause; by examining the nature of this pretended *infallibility*. Neither, at present, shall I take notice of those reasons, which are here produced by this *Missioner* to support it. These, God willing, shall be considered in their proper place, *viz.* in my *reflections upon the Missioner's Answer to the Plain Man's Reply*. Which I hope, in due time, to publish. So much for his *general* exception.

His exceptions in *special*, are against those directions, which by way of expedient I desired you to observe;

I. He is not well pleased that I send you to your prayers. *To pray unto God to give you his grace; to hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering.* Heb. 10. 23.

But this is to correct *St. Paul*, and not the *Country Parson*. Who thinks it very proper (since we are to pray in faith) to turn an apostolic precept into prayer. And being admonished by the apostle to *hold fast our profession*: in an humble dependance upon the divine grace, we pray unto God to enable us to do it.

However at last he gives you leave to say your prayers. But then he tells you it must be in this form. *If I be not in the right, &c.* And *if I be in the right, &c.*

But will this Missioner allow his new converts to pray with these *if's* and *and's*? If he grants them such liberty, let me then desire them daily to repeat this prayer.

If the Church of Rome, of which I have now professed my self a member, is not a sound catholic Church; but in any instance is erroneous, superstitious and idolatrous; Lord pardon my errors, and lead me into the way of truth. And if the reformation of the Church of England, is just and warrantable, and agreeable to thy holy word; Lord open mine eyes, that I may acknowledge my mistake and return into her communion. Amen.

If here it shall be further urged; that this conditional way of praying is indeed very fit for protestants, who are not infallibly secure that their faith is true, being various and uncertain; (pag. 3.)

But these kind of prayers are never to be used by Roman Catholics, who are certain that their faith is true; and that they are in the right, as being members of an infallible Church: tell him,

This is only to talk big, and to be judge in his own cause: For, 1. A man may be certain, and sure that he is in the right, without being infallible.

2. There is greater uncertainty; more divisions and diversity of opinions (and that in matters of faith) in the church of Rome, than there are in the Church of England.

If he startles at the charge, and thinks himself affronted; desire him (for his satisfaction) to return an answer to the learned Dr. Stillingfleet upon that subject. The

2. Direction (with which he is likewise pleased to find fault) was this;

When you read the holy scriptures, and do find some place which

is too difficult for you, do not then pretend to interpret it your selves. But beg the direction of your spiritual guide; and desire him to shew you how it is to be understood.

It seems this gentleman is resolved to shew his skill; otherwise this *expedient* (for a reason that he knows) might have pass'd without his censure.

'Tis very surprizing; that a *Romish Priest*, who expects such blind obedience to his dictates, should yet be thus offended at this honest advice.

But the reason is evident.

For whilst the good *protestants* of *England* are so kind to us, and so careful of *themselves*, as to own their clergy (as blessed be God they do, notwithstanding all the arts of *Rome* to withdraw them from us) I say, whilst they stick to their clergy, thro' God's blessing, they are certainly safe.

As to the slavery of such submission (which this author suggests) with respect to the Church of *England*, 'tis an invidious reflection.

We do indeed desire you to take our advice. *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.* 2 Cor. 1. 24.

Now the scripture is the only rule of our faith; and as such (to use his own expression) *we will stand and fall by it.* (Plain Man's Answer. p. 3.) *And therefore* (as he well reminds you) *you must search diligently and soberly into your selves.* (ib. p. 4.) Imitate those noble *Bereans*, who *received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.* Acts 17. 11.

But to what purpose (thinks this author) do you read the *scriptures*, which neither you, nor your clergy, can pretend to interpret?

And why not? Cannot the divines of the Church of *Eng-land*

land interpret scripture as well as the priests of the Church of Rome? No, saith he, because they are not infallible; (and thus he upbraids us at least *ten* times in this very answer).

But what strange impertinence is this? That those men should be thus concern'd for the want of infallibility in others, who have so little of it themselves.

For is there any thing more fallible and contradicting, than those vast volumes of popish commentators, that even make our shelves to crack? And yet all these, fallible as they are, owned and published, with the usual *approbations*, and *permissu superiorum*.

Now had I leisure to expostulate, I would desire this Missioner (who writes to me in your name) to resolve me; that since it would be very profitable for all christians, that the scriptures should be *infallibly* interpreted; why doth the Church of Rome employ particular doctors to interpret them *fallibly*? Why are such different and contradictory expositions published by her authority? Why doth she not rather petition his *Holiness*, or whoever else is best able to do it, to explain them *infallibly*? Why doth she *hide her candle under a bushel*, and *keep her talent*, of interpreting scripture *infallibly*, *wrapt up in a napkin*? How such unfaithfulness can be answered to her lord and master *Jesus Christ*, I leave him sadly to consider. *To him that knoweth to do good and doth it not, to him it is sin.* James 4. 17.

3. I did direct you; *as far as possible to avoid all disputes about religion*. And thus far he allows you to follow my advice. *For he hates contentions, heats and animosities*. And indeed so do I, as being fully convinced, that it is much more profitable, both for me and my parish, to spend my time in devotion and practical discourses, than in these unpleasing disputes.

And I have great reason to affirm; that the rest of my brethren of the Church of *England* are likewise of the same mind.

But

But since the importunity of others, in seducing our people, hath forced us to it, we dare not now be silent: and think ourselves obliged as good shepherds, not only to feed our flocks, but also to keep them from wandering into by-paths, and to defend them from those that would lead them astray.

To his exceptions against my *fourth* expedient I do thus reply. That it will be time enough to enquire after the priviledges of the *Roman Church*, when you are first convinced; that it is your duty to leave the communion of the Church of *England*.

Now whoever would perswade you to such a separation (I told you if he will proceed rationally and to the purpose) he must first convince you; "that the Church of *England* is no sound member of the Church catholic: but that her doctrine is either *defective* or *false*."

"If he pretends that it is *defective*; he must then shew, that there are some truths necessarily to be believed, as articles of faith, which the Church of *England* doth not receive as such. And also that there are some necessary duties, or parts of worship, which the church of *England* either wholly omits, or else doth not require under any such necessity."

"But if he affirms, *secondly*, That the doctrine of the Church of *England* is *false*, he must then prove; that the Church of *England* doth require some *unlawful* condition of her communion; and that either in *faith* or *worship*. Plainly thus.

"He must make it appear that her faith is *erroneous* and contrary to written word of God; *The Faith once deliver'd to the Saints*. Or else that worship is *unlawful*, superstitious or idolatrous.

All this indeed he thought very reasonable. And because he hath no leisure for long enquiries, (p. 7.) I will not be so rude as to press him beyond his measures.

However:

However I must be so obliging as to assure him; that when he hath found his arguments, I shall be ready to attend him.

And now (my good *Parishoners*) having dispatht this answer, let me thus briefly enforce my former.

A D M O N I T I O N.

'TIS a serious thing to change your religion. Eternity depends upon it. And therefore 'tis an unpardonable error, to be guilty of rashness in so weighty a concern.

Be not perswaded out of your senses with confidence and noise; Nor do you presently conclude, that some men are in the *right*; because they say it is impossible they should be in the *wrong*.

If they think to frighten you into their way by telling you; that you are otherwise damned: regard such threatnings no more than you would the ravings of a quaker. *For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.* 2 Cor. 10. 18.

Be not discouraged; nor suspect the truth of your faith, because at first hearing you cannot answer a sophistical *objection*. Thinking men, who expect solid arguments, may possibly be surpriz'd, on the sudden, with such slender stuff. For even a child may puzzle a statesman, at *riddle my riddle*.

But these kind of tricks, when a little examined, how trifling do they appear! and signify nothing but the confidence of those who urge them.

Remember this, and shew your selves men.

THE
CHILD'S MONITOR
AGAINST
POPE RY.

WRITTEN AT FIRST,

For the private use of a child of a person of quality, who hath
popish parents: and now made public for the benefit of o-
thers, to prevent their being drawn aside from the commu-
nion of the Church of *England*.

Little children let no man deceive you. 1 John iii. 7.

L O N D O N,

Printed in the Year 1687. Re-printed for J. and J. RIVINGTON in St. Paul's
Church-Yard, and S. PARKER, Bookfeller in Oxford, 1751.

THE
CHILD'S MONITOR

AGAINST

POPERY.

WRITTEN AT FIRST

For the private use of a child of a person of quality, who hath
popish parents: and now made public for the benefit of o-
thers, to prevent their being drawn aside from the commu-
nion of the Church of England.

A little children let no man deceive you. 1 John iii. 7.

L O N D O N

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THE
CHILD'S MONITOR

AGAINST

POPPERY.

DEAR CHILD,

I Am very glad to hear that you continue firm in your religion, and are still a true son of the *Church of England*. I know you will be strongly tempted to a change; and do therefore desire you to observe these following directions.

I. Say your prayers morning and evening. Particularly beg of God to keep you by his power *through faith unto salvation*. And with your daily devotions repeat this prayer.

Defend me, O Lord, who am thy child and servant, with thy heavenly grace, that I may continue thine for ever: and daily increase in thy holy spirit more and more, until I come unto thine everlasting kingdom. Amen.

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II. Read

II. Read constantly the holy scriptures, especially such parts and portions as are most easy for your capacity; as the *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, the *Gospels*, and indeed the whole *New Testament*; excepting the *Revelations*, the epistles to the *Romans* and *Hebrews*; which, 'till your judgment is riper, you may let alone: only in the *Romans* the 12th and 13th chapters, and the 11th, 12th, and 13th chapters of the *Hebrews*, are very easy and intelligible; and as much, I would advise you often to read them.

Timothy did know the scriptures from a child. And *St. Paul* assures him, they were able to make him wise unto salvation. 2 Tim. 3. 15.

III. If your parents should be urgent with you (as I believe they will) and should charge you upon their blessing to go to mass; you may then make this answer.

That you do most heartily beg their blessing, which you hope they will freely give you. But if they should be so harsh and unnatural as to deny it, yet still do you beg it of them. And then do not doubt but that God will say *Amen*, and give you his blessing. *When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up.* Psalm 27. 12.

You may, with submission tell them, that tho' it is the duty of children to obey their parents, yet that duty is expressed with this limitation, *In the Lord.* Eph. 6. 1. Intimating, that if our earthly parents command any thing which is unlawful, we must then remember that we have an heavenly father who commands the contrary. And therefore being persuaded that it is unlawful so to do, you must not go to mass, tho' they do command you.

IV. If

IV. If they shall then shew you the *Missal*, or other *popish books*, and shall bid you look and read how pious and devout they are, and what excellent prayers are contained in them; and whether it is not prejudice and perverseness to neglect such devotions?

To this you may answer.

You do not doubt but there are good instructions in many *popish books*. But so there likewise are in the books of *Jews*, *Turks*, and *Heathens*. *Cato's verses*, and *Tully's offices* are both excellent books. And there are many good things in the *Alcoran*. And *Moses* his law we *Christians* do receive and acknowledge to be from God. But what then? Must we therefore turn *Heathens*, or *Turks*, or *Jews*? They will not say that we must. By the same reason neither are you obliged to turn *Papist*, because there are many good things in *popish books*. For the question is not, whether there are not many good things in *popish books*? Who denies it? But the question is, whether there are not some things bad, as having no warrant from holy scripture? And in such a case our *blessed Saviour* hath admonished, *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*. Matth. 15. 9.

V. If they shall next ask you, what those things are, either in the *mass book*, or in any other of their devotions, which you think are bad, and contrary to scripture; your reply may be this.

That there are learned men in the Church of *England*, who can both tell and prove it to them. But as for your self, you are but a child, and are not able to dispute. You do therefore desire them that they would as yet let you alone, and permit you to serve God, as you have been instructed in the Church of *England*. The which liberty you do with the greater confidence beg of them, because in the worship of the Church
of

of *England*, there is nothing required of you, either to be *believed* or *practised*, which they, or their *priests* can pretend to be unlawful.

That this may appear, desire them to consider, that religion doth consist of two parts; *faith* and *obedience*. As to your *faith*, you believe the *apostle's creed*. And as to *obedience*, the *ten commandments* are your rule. You know your *duty towards God*, and your *duty towards your neighbour*, as they are expressed in your *church catechism*. You do remember the promise and vow which was made for you at your *baptism*, and which you your self ratify'd in your *confirmation*. Whereupon you may desire them to resolve you, whether he, who doth *renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh*? Whether he, who *believes all the articles of the christian faith*? Whether he, who *endeavours to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of his life*? And when he hath offended God, humbly begs pardon in the name, and for the sake of *Jesus Christ*? Whether he, who daily prays to God for *grace* and divine assistance, according to the directions in the *Lord's prayer*? I say, let them resolve you, whether such an one, who doth *thus* believe, and *thus* practice, may not come to heaven, tho' he doth not presently turn *papist*, by believing the *Pope* to be the *vicar of Christ*, and *head of the Church*?

VI. Do not think any argument unanswerable, because you your self cannot answer it. Should any one bid you to *lift* such a *log of wood*, or *piece of lead*, which being too heavy for you, you are not able to *stir*, will you therefore say no man else can *lift* it? Whereas there are not only a great many *porters* who can *carry* it, but even you your self, when you come to be a *grown man*, may be able to do it. In like manner, those very arguments

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arguments which do now puzzle you, are not only answered by several learned men ; but even you your self, when your parts are ripen'd, and your understanding enlarged, may be able to answer.

Lastly, Go to your *Minister*, and desire him to pray for you, and to give you his directions. 'Tis *his* work and business to *dispute* and *defend* your religion ; 'tis *your's* to *believe* and *practise* it.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

In the Defence of the Plain Man's Reply, &c. pag. 17. line 29. for *rigteousness*, read *righteousness*.

Pag. 20. line 28. after *pillar and ground of the truth*: add pag. 14. The Church catholic, *without controversy*, is the *pillar and ground of the truth*.

Pag. 21. line 16. for *euen*, read *even*.

arguments which do now puzzle you, are not only answered by several learned men; but even you your self, when your parts are ripen'd, and your understanding enlarged, may be able to answer.

Exhort. Go to your Minister, and desire him to pray for you, and to give you his directions. 'Tis his work and business to dispute and discuss your religion; 'tis your's to believe and practise it.

IN THE DEFENCE OF THE PLAIN MAN'S REPLY, &c. pag. 17. line 29. for righteousness, read righteousness.

ERRATA.
In the Defence of the Plain Man's Reply, &c. pag. 17. line 29. for righteousness, read righteousness.
Pag. 20. line 28. after pillar and ground of the truth: add pag. 17. The Church catholic, without controversy, is the pillar and ground of the truth.
Pag. 21. line 16. for even, read even.

